

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 10, 11, 16, 20, 30, 35, 39, 43, 49 and 54 have been amended, and claims 9, 19, 28, 38, 47, and 57 have been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 1-8, 10-18, 20-27, 29-37, 39-46, and 48-56 are pending and under consideration.

OBJECTION TO CLAIMS

Claims 1-10 stand objected to for including an informality in claim 1. In accordance with the Examiner's helpful suggestion, claim 1 has been amended to properly set forth "locator" rather than "locater."

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC 112

Claims 43-44 and 46 stand rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as claim 43 depends from itself. Accordingly, claim 43 has been amended to properly depend from claim 42.

Claims 16, 35, and 54 stand rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as the claims were indicated as being unclear. Accordingly, claims 16, 35 and 54 have been amended to more clearly claim the intended invention.

Therefore, for at least the above, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC 102

Claims 1-8, 10-18, 20-27, 29-37, 39-46, and 48-56 stand rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Moody et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,890,177. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

By way of review and as an example, independent claim 1 sets forth:

"[a] related documents processing device comprising:
a detector detecting relevance among documents; and

a locator locating a timewise latest document related to a document selected based on detected relevance information,

wherein the documents are electronic mail documents, and the relevance information detected by the detector is an exchange history of the electronic mail documents."

The remaining independent claims have been amended similarly to include recitations similar to "wherein the documents are electronic mail documents, and the relevance information detected by the detector is an exchange history of the electronic mail documents," amended into claim 1.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Moody et al. at least fails to disclose the presently claimed documents being electronic mail documents and/or the claimed relevance information being detected by the detector being an "exchange history of the electronic mail documents."

Moody et al. sets forth a document collection method of collecting different edited versions of the same document and combining all the different edits from each edited document into a single document. In Moody et al., many different people can work on the same document, make their individual edits to the document, and then the differently edited documents can be collected, and different edits may potentially then be automatically merged into a single document or the different edits illustrated on the same screen for a user to approve of the same.

The Office Action appears to be relying on a potential email method of delivery of the different edited versions of the same documents as disclosing the claimed documents being electronic mail documents.

However, in Moody et al., the emailed edited documents would appear to only be attachments to their respective emails. The attachments are not electronic mail documents.

In additions, Moody et al. would appear to remove the email attachments, convert each document into the proper format, and then evaluate the edits within each document. At this point, the illustrated edits are definitely not electronic mail documents. The illustrated edits are merely portions of documents resident on the ultimate primary user's computer.

Thus, in Moody et al., the use of email is only a mechanism for transporting documents. Once the documents are received at an ultimate primary user's computer (or center combining location) the documents are removed from the emails and are no longer associated with the

same. Further, when the formats of each documents are modified, the reformatted documents are even different from the documents forwarded with the email.

Further, regarding the claimed relevance information being detected by the detector being an "exchange history of the electronic mail documents," Moody et al. further fails to disclose this feature.

Any relevance information regarding the documents transported via each email would not have anything to do with the respective emails, but rather would only concern the relevance of the contents of the documents contained in the emails.

Further, any exchange history in Moody et al. would only concern exchange histories between documents or edits within each document, there would not be any need or desire to maintain an exchange history of the emails that are only used for transporting the respective documents.

Therefore, for at least the above, it is respectfully requested that this rejection of claims 1-8, 10-18, 20-27, 29-37, 39-46, and 48-56 be withdrawn and claims 1-8, 10-18, 20-27, 29-37, 39-46, and 48-56 be allowed.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

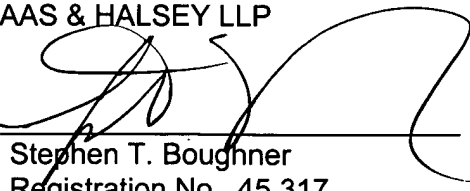
If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: 11/15/04

By:


Stephen T. Boughner
Registration No. 45,317

1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501